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Coordination programme and other questions: calendar of conferences and meetings in the economic, social and related fields

Letter dated 12 July 2007 from the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences to the President of the Economic and Social Council

In response to the invitation of the Economic and Social Council in its decision 1988/103, the Committee on Conferences met on 11 July to review the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings for 2008 and 2009 in the economic, social and related fields (E/2007/L.10). The Committee welcomed the opportunity to review the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings and to provide, as appropriate, its recommendations thereon to the Council.

In introducing the provisional calendar, the Secretary of the Committee on Conferences drew the attention of the Committee to some important guidelines, also referred to in the preamble, which had been established by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in their resolutions and decisions on the calendar of conferences and meetings. Those guidelines included the Council's decision to further consider the biennialization of the sessions of its subsidiary bodies (see Council resolution 1996/41 and General Assembly resolution 50/227). In this regard, it was noted that the United Nations Forum on Forests had decided to biennialize its sessions starting in 2007.

The attention of the Committee was drawn to Human Rights Council decision 1/102 to extend exceptionally for one year the mandates and the mandate holders of all the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights, the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the procedure established in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1503 (XLVIII). This is subject to the review being undertaken by the Council.

The Committee took note of the transfer of responsibility for servicing the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women from New York to Geneva.

* E/2007/100 and Corr.1.

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In the preparation of the calendar, careful consideration had been given to avoiding scheduling meetings on Orthodox Good Friday, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/208 A. Once the exact dates of Eid al Adha and Eid al Fitr became known, as with other official United Nations holidays, no official meeting would be scheduled for those days.

The Committee recalled that subsidiary bodies should end their sessions at last eight weeks before the session of the Economic and Social Council to which they reported, and pointed out that every effort had been made in the preparation of the draft calendar to follow that guideline as much as possible. It was also reiterated that every effort was made to avoid any overlap of meetings related to the same sector of activity.

The Committee recommended the adoption of the provisional calendar of conferences and meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council for 2008 and 2009, and recommended that the Council bear in mind the observations and suggestions set out above.

In closing, I would like to express the appreciation of the Committee for the invitation of the Council to review its draft calendar of conferences and meetings and for the continued close cooperation between the Council and the Committee.

(*Signed*) Yury **Yaroshevich**
Chairman of the Committee on Conferences